Snake Puppet

Kit contains:

- snake puppet template
- 8 brass fasteners (brads)
- 3 skewers

You will need: scissors, tape, a holepunch or sharp pencil, coloring supplies, and a buddy to help you puppeteer.

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INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1. Color your snake template.

Step 2. Cut out your snake pieces. Use a holepunch or a sharp pencil to poke holes through all of the marked circles.

Step 3. Arrange your snake pieces into a pleasing pattern and connect them with the brass fasteners. (To use a brad, poke both prongs through the lined-up holes, and then spread the prongs open.)

Step 4. Tape the skewers to the back of the snake: one at the head, one at the tail, and one in the middle. Grab your buddy and see how it works. One puppeteer will control two skewers, the other will control the third.

Template available from: minimadthings.com/collections/printable-craft-activities/products/snake-puppet-printable-template

Step 5. Refine your design! It's likely that your puppet won't work optimally on your first try. Testing and improving your project are parts of the **engineering design process**. Ask yourself:

- Which sections operate smoothly?
- Which sections don't work as well?

Undo your brads and flip various snake pieces 180°. Test your snake puppet again with your co-puppeteer until you're happy with its function.

Puppets on sticks have a long history. For instance, dragon dances, in which a team of performers operate a dragon puppet using poles, date back to China's Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). Variations are still performed in countries across Asia today.

https://tatter.org/dragon-dance/

REAL SNAKES IN ILLINOIS

Your snake puppet is an imaginary species, but there area real snakes that you can learn about. For instance, garter snakes (*Thamnophis*) are our reptile neighbors that live throughout much of North America. Our area has its own subspecies, the Chicago Garter Snake (below). Species vary in color, but they tend to have light stripes that run the length of their dark bodies. Common garter snakes have thin bodies that can grow to 46 to 137 centimeters in length.

While most snakes tend to be loners, garter snakes have buddies and prefer to live with their groups of friends. Awww!

http://www.biokids.umich.edu/critters/Thamnophis_sirtalis/

https://www.science.org/content/article/garter-snakes-are-surprisingly-social-forming-friendships-fellow-serpents